

Beach COMBERS

Some success stories to date:

- Discovery of banded birds from as far away as Hawaii;
- Comparisons between Monterey Bay and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries, revealing unusually high numbers of dead adult harbor seals in localized areas;
- High deposition of Common Murres led to the discovery of a previously unrecognized threat of gillnet mortality for Common Murres, Harbor Porpoise, and Sea Otters;
- Assessment of impacts from oil spills in Monterey Bay;
- Contribution to an article in *Nature* documenting the impacts of a toxic marine algal bloom on marine animals.

Help us collect good data:
**PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
ANIMALS OR PARTS OF
ANIMALS FROM THE BEACH**



Beach COMBERS is a program of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary



Beach COMBERS

Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940

Beach COMBERS

Coastal Ocean Mammal /
Bird Education and
Research Surveys



“Keeping a finger on
the pulse of the Sanctuary”



Monterey Bay
National Marine Sanctuary
<http://www.mbnms.nos.noaa.gov>

Beach COMBERS

INTRODUCTION

Established in 1997, Beach COMBERS (Coastal Ocean Mammal/Bird Education and Research Surveys) is a beach monitoring program. Volunteers are assigned to a particular beach, returning at the same time each month to record the changes they observe throughout the year.

The goals of Beach COMBERS are:

- To obtain baseline information on rates of beach strandings for all species of marine birds and mammals in the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary;
- To assist the Sanctuary in the early detection of mortality events both natural and human-caused;
- To assess causes of mortality events;
- To monitor deposition of oil and tar.

Information on stranded animals is also made available to Moss Landing and Long Marine Laboratories, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, the Marine Mammal Center, the SPCA, and the coast wide National Marine Fisheries Services Stranding Network.

WHY VOLUNTEER?

Beach COMBERS volunteers:

- Participate in local resource management;
- Gain skills and knowledge in science and natural history;
- Practice stewardship of the local beaches;
- Receive Beach COMBERS updates and enrichments



FIELD WORK

Beach COMBERS volunteers work in pairs to sample pre-defined beach segments once a month. Volunteers must possess skill in identifying live and dead marine birds and mammals, often decomposed or scavenged. Volunteers receive 20 hours of training on how to survey a beach, identify marine birds and mammals, and document observations. Beach segments are approximately 5km in length and take an average of 4 hours to complete. Volunteers must be willing and able to walk long stretches of sandy, uneven terrain, often remote from human services. This requires a reliable commitment, but is extremely rewarding for those involved.

If you are interested in becoming a Beach COMBER volunteer or would like to be notified about future trainings, please fill out the form below and mail to:

Beach COMBERS

Monterey Bay
National Marine Sanctuary
299 Foam Street
Monterey, CA 93940
(831) 647-4201

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Geographic Area of Interest
(check all that apply)

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Davenport | <input type="checkbox"/> Pacific Grove |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Cruz | <input type="checkbox"/> Carmel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moss Landing | <input type="checkbox"/> Big Sur |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Monterey | <input type="checkbox"/> Cambria |